IMT Nuremberg Archives

H – 2491

International Court of Justice

OFFICE OF U.S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL FOR WAR CRIMES

EVIDENCE DIVISION

Date : 19 July 1948

I certify that Document Number 3421-PS was introduced into evidence as Exhibit Number USA-230 in the Trial by the International Tribunal of Hermann GOERING, et al, which commenced on 20 November 1945, and that the attached photostat is a true and correct copy of the original.

Fred Niebergall

Fred NIEBERGALL
Chief, Document
Control Branch.

H2491 - 0002

H2491 – 0003

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the annexed document 3421-PS No. USA - 230 is a photostat of an original document submitted in evidence by the United States Prosecution under this number. The original document has been withdrawn in accordance with Rule 10 of the International Military Tribunal, and to the best of my knowledge and belief is to be held at the National Archives, Washington D.C. .

Paul Joosten

Nuremberg, 25 June 1948

PAUL A. JOOSTEN

General Secretary
International Military
Tribunal

H2491 - 0004

SECRET

Testimony of Fritz Sauckel, taken at Nuremberg, Germany, 10:30 to 12:10, 22 September 1945, by John J. Monigan, Jr., Maj., CAC, OUSCC. Also present: Jesse F. Landrum, Capt, AGD, Court Reporter, and T/5 Gunter Kosse, Interpreter.

MAJ. MONIGAN TO THE INTERPRETER:

Q You are reminded that you are still under oath.

A Yes, sir.

TO THE WITNESS THROUGH THE INTERPRETER:

Q You are reminded that you are still under oath.

A Yes.

Q Do you wish to continue with this discussion about the meeting?

A I discussed yesterday the difficulties and differences among the various offices of Speer, Goebbels, and so on. I want to mention two important points which made my work very hard. The German limitation on armament production concerning workers, material, factories, and so on, caused Speer to look especially after the quality of the work. He, therefore, gave details at the meeting which I had in 1943, at Weimar, concerning this subject. Because I was not able to produce weapons, ammunition, and so on, in the same amount as the U.S. or Russia, he did not want to produce the stuff

H2491 – 0005

in a production series but was trying to improve the weapons and turn out different and new weapons and material in order to make up for the limited amount. Speer was of the opinion that if we would produce weapons in series it would not only be possible to change over as fast to a new production of weapons. He expressed these details in the sense against mass production will have quality. My personal opinion was that it was dangerous because in my opinion we should have quality and quantity. I got annoyed myself during the battles when we didn't have any tanks and artillery; but this was a series of Speer and, therefore, I had to obey his orders in my labor conscription. This caused a change of the production of several weapons, especially airplanes, tanks, and antiaircraft guns. Many famous engineers in the airplane industry were of the opinion that we were not producing airplanes but that we were experimenting. There were many frequent changes of the caliber of ammunition, especially from small caliber to larger ones in the antiaircraft and anti-tank industries. This also was a cause of the change of specialists among the various factories. We also were suffering very much because the program of building and the planes were changing all the time. It so happened that a factory which was quite capable of production of a small caliber kind of ammunition was not able to

(SAUCKEL)

A 089204

H2491 – 0006

SECRET

do so when required to produce a larger caliber; therefore, the whole factory had to be changed and the orders given to different factories. The main section which was concerned about these things was the one of the Rustungs Amt Saur. Saur was right temperamental in his actions because he took on actions he caused a lot of harm in our work. This change of process of working caused a lot of individual work for myself and for my offices. To my own opinion, I have to say that this naturally minimized the production considerably. I am convinced that for these reasons we were not able to produce as much as we did in the last war. One can say to this that in the last war that the same weapons were used all over, while in this war they were constantly changing according to Speer's orders. The T-45, for instance, which was produced in great quantities in Russia, even though it was not as good as our Panther or Tiger tank, was better because it could be made in big quantities. Even though the German Tiger or Panther tanks were qualitively better than the Russian tanks, we were not able to bring into action as many as the Russian tanks; and it was shown that the Russians with their tanks which were not as good as ours were better because they had more than we did--the quality was not able to overdo the quantity. In 1943, for instance, I experienced myself, that

A 089205

H2491 - 0007

some factories had to change over and therefore lost more than four months' time in the production. This also caused difficulties in the stealing of the assignment of workers from the workers' reserve to the new industries. I could talk about this on and on, but I want to stop it now because we can argue about this forever.

Another thing which caused great concern was the change-over the agricultural workers which in winter had to be employed in Speer's factories. My job was so hard because in the early Spring when Speer was starting his new production I was not able to get these workers back because Speer refused to return these workers to the agricultural areas. Therefore, there was created the Blauzettel (blue paper) system which gave the right to the workers who were working during the winter months in Speer's factories to come back to the farm in the Spring.

To throw a light on the differences between me and Himmler concerning this, I want to tell you now: I mentioned yesterday what I was accused of in the year 1943, by Speer, Goebbels and later on even Himmler. To clear these accusations up I therefore prepared a defense paper. In this defense paper I wanted the Fuehrer himself gave orders concerning these things to myself. Himmler answered me with a very unfriendly letter and was very indecent to mention the Fuehrer in the defense of

H2491 - 0008

myself. It is not possible under these circumstances to go through with the mission according to ones own word. I only mention this to show you again the terrifically hard atmosphere under which I had to work.

Now, coming to the end of all this, I must say that in the year 1944, there was hardly any new workers left which could be used any more. The only thing was left to undertake certain concentrations within the German war production itself. Himmler himself, for reasons of his own initiative, concerned himself with that. He, therefore, used especially for the underground factories which were his own work more or less the people from the concentration camps. Once he said to the Fuehrer when I was present that the workers from the concentration camps were the best ones. I was opposed to that and also talked to the Fuehrer about that because I saw in that disqualification of workers, the workers themselves and the atmosphere they were in. I say that under oath now that I never was concerned with any of these things, that is, the transferring of the people from the concentration camps to these places of work. I also don't know how this happened and I never had anything whatsoever to do with any of the administration or other kind of work which occurred there. I also don't know how this was done. All I know about this is that entrusted with this kind of work was an SS Obergruppen-

(SAUCKEL)

H2491 - 0009

fuehrer Kammler, who was an engineer, and Obergruppenfuehrer Pohl, who was responsible for the conscription of the people from the concentration camp to the places of work. I am completely unable to tell you to what extent these people from the concentration camp were used. Also, I am not able to tell you under what conditions they were working. I myself was never interested in all these things and, therefore, I kept away from them as much as possible. I was never informed about anything of that nature either by Hitler, the Reichsminister, or Goebbels, officially. All this work was done by the SS themselves. This was Office 6 of the SS. I can tell you that for sure because we don't know anything about the SS. I just reported as far as I can remember the things the way I would have reported them to the Fuehrer himself or Milch about the work, details of the work, from the beginning to the end. To give an over-all picture, I, therefore, put down on paper seven points which I want to tell you now.

Q (The witness is referring to a paper, written in his own handwriting, entitled "Zusammenfassung Meiner Ansfuhrungen, etc.")

A 1) The mission of the Generalbovllmachtigten was entrusted to me at the end of March, 1942, as a kind of soldierly work. At the same time a most valid mission for the necessity

No. of Pages..... No. of Copies.....

H2491 - 0010

SECRET

was given to me by the Fuehrer himself. 2) Under this condition it was impossible for me to discuss the acceptance or refusal of this work. 3) The conscription of foreign labor was ordered especially by the Fuehrer himself. This was not contained in the first paragraph which I showed to the Fuehrer. 4) For the reason of giving my oath to the Volk, Reich und Fuehrer; I had to use all my body and soul to fulfill this order. 5) The successful completion of this mission was very hard because I was in constant argument with other offices and other ministers. The other offices gave rights to their subordinate offices, and it cost themselves later on. 6) I was trying very hard to keep the job given to me by always staying within the law. I always tried to consider besides the important war production, the also very vital civil production, in my actions, as long as they were important for Germany as well as for occupied territories. 7) As my most gentle job I considered it as far as I am concerned for that for the health, just treatment, and payment, and sufficient food, to take care of all workers working for Germany, no matter if they were German or foreign. For this I give as the proof especially all my co-workers and all the decrees and orders given out by me in great numbers. The executive for the conscription of the foreign workers was in the regional

A 089209

H2491 - 0011

offices. Taking care of these people was a job of the DAF. I had nothing to do with the conscription of prisoners from concentration camps or other kinds of prisoners.

I want to add to this that I was always able to succeed in fulfilling my principles. I always tried to do the best I could; I worked very hard to fulfill all these principles and all these points which I laid down myself and, therefore, I was accused of not being a National Socialist but more or less a European. I didn't write this down, naturally. I thought different from many of those because I was also in Germany before during my time as a sailor and, therefore, I got around quite a bit and looked at all these things from a different kind of view point. I want to ask your permission to add that I never did any criminal thing knowingly and if I would have known so I would not have done that. My friends very often accused me that I worked too much with the heart and not enough with the brains, but naturally I can't say that myself. I am ready to take all the responsibility for anything that I did which any other decent person would do so too since I don't think that I knew of anything that is going on for about three months, I am not able to say what I am accused of.

Q Now, in the course of your long discussion in which you have convered in generall all the various problems,

H2491 - 0012

administrative and otherwise. In this entire program there are some individual questions about which we could go into a little more now.

A Yes.

Q First of all, the organization of this Central Planning Commission.

A Yes.

Q Principally, what I am interested in is the functions and responsibilities of the Central Planning Commission in their relationship to your office and their relation to the other industries.

A I believe this Central Planning was founded about three months after my taking over my office. This was founded on account of a law by the Fuehrer or just upon an agreement between the Fuehrer and Speer and Goering, I don't know. The leader and Chairman of this Central Planning was Speer himself. How the Central Planning was founded to take the work from the Four-Year Plan to Speer, I think, because Goering was already ill at that time and there were also difficulties about which I am not informed. Speer constantly took the job of the great changes in new production under his own direction. Steady members of this Central Planning were the Staatsekretar and Field Marshal Milch, and the Staatsekretar Koerner. These three were responsible for the decisions of the Central

H2491 - 0013

SECRET

Planning. Orders for internal affairs and they went through this office if they were worked out by other people inside the office. I was only called to this Central Planning if my mission was discussed, and the demands were put before me and my offices from Speer, Four-Year plan, as well as from Milch. The Fuehrer himself told me to fulfill these demands without question. In other words, if Speer asked me for certain amount of workers, for instance, several thousand, I could not refuse him. The concerned minister had to give the number to the Central Planning and that was the only place where the number of workers could be discussed. In the Central Planning it was decided how many workers I was able to supply to these various sections like Milch and Speer, agriculture, and so on. If it came to an argument, these discussions were brought before the Fuehrer and he then decided upon them himself.

Q Would the Central Planning Commission, in their outline of workers to be provided for agriculture and for Speer and for Milch's industries, etc., just give you the numbers of workers which they required, or would you get the allocation of the workers, too, say panzers and machine guns, and so on, from the Central Planning Commission.

A In general, I always got the numbers for the sections in large but except for Speer who always demanded individual

H2491 - 0014

numbers of workers for all agricultural works or mining industries; in other words, Speer always demanded a certain amount of workers for each work.

Q Except for Speer, they would give the requirements in general for the broad field, but in Speer's work you would get them allocated by industry, and so on, is that right?

A The others I only got whatever was left, because Speer told me once in the presence of the Fuehrer that I am here to work for Speer and that mainly I am his man; he mentioned it very often, and all the countries are not important. It was very unnatural that process of doing these things. These smaller places, instead of ordering their workers from the next higher echelons, gave their orders to the very highest to Speer who in turn gave it down to the lower ones to me; and this was the reason for the Rotzettel (red slip) system which had to be fulfilled by me without question. In practice it turned out to be that if a factory actually didn't need any workers but Speer demanded them for that factory I had to supply these workers without being able to discuss or to tell him that it would be a waste of manpower; I just had to do it because Speer had complete domination.

Q When it was determined in the Central Planning Commission that say a thousand workers would be required by Speer, how did those workers find their way from all over Germany and

No. of Pages..... No. of Copies.....

SECRET

A 089213

SECRET

Europe into the Krupp factory, for instance?

A The orders were given from higher echelons down to lower echelons; for instance, the trains which were either turned over from one office to another or the lower echelons in Berlin for instance got orders to transfer certain men from one factory which happened to be in Berlin to another factory which was also in Berlin. This was also through the cooperation among the various offices who were in charge of Hildebrandt. The orders were discussed in a so-called daily schedule of trains which was decided upon in all these meetings.

Q Well, as I understand it, you would get a requirement for say a thousand workers for panzers, say; now, in Germany certain factories would be making tread, some would be making turrets, and some would be making other things. Now, of that thousand workers needed for tank production some would be working on treads and some would be working on other things. How did they get into the particular factories which were making the specific products?

A This was accomplished by giving orders wrecklessly through the various offices. A factory, for instance, got an order to send 20 or 30 men to another place, and they were just ordered to go there. This was the reason for the Notdienstverordnung where the workers were forced by a decree to obey any order which

H2491 - 0015

H2491 - 0016

was given to them.

Q After the workers were conscripted inside the Reich and outside, they would be worked according to certain skills and technical specialties, would they not?

A As far as possible, they were used according to the profession they learned.

Q And the local gau labor offices, etc., would have a list of all the workers according to their several skills, would they not?

A Yes, there were detailed files about this. This was the basic principle of orders: There were various offices which only were concerned about a certain kind of trade or skill.

Q So, when you got the requirement from the Central Planning Commission for a hundred thousand men for tank production, would you, through your ministry, tell the various offices that you needed so many welders and so many machine tool people, etc., and then tell them how many of each specialty you wanted?

A When I got these orders my assistants were always present and they in turn took down the individual numbers required for this kind of work. I also received rosters which pointed out in detail how many people were needed for certain productions and how many were needed in a certain place. There was also, besides the red slip system, another one, which was a

H2491 - 0017

system used after the red slip system. We called this the Dringlichkeitsstufen--that means the preference of one kind of worker. These Dringlichkeitsstufen, which were divided according to place, kind of work, were given to me in the presence of my assistants and they in turn worked out these plans. The influence of Speer was so great that sometimes he specifically asked for certain specialists from a certain factory to be turned over to another place. It also happened that we were not even told about these things. If we were not able to supply him with workers from inside Germany, we had to take them from the other departments or from foreign countries. There was always a reserve of something like 500,000 people who went to schools where they were trained for the armament production.

Q That was 500,000 German and foreign workers?

A Yes.

Q When a requirement was fixed for Speer or for Milch in the Central Planning Commission and they called you in and said we need 500,000 or some number of workers, would they give at that time the break-down of what kind of workers they wanted or would they give a blanket request for 500,000 without the listing of specialties?

A Naturally, they gave a detailed breakdown. For instance, they only asked for miners, but they also asked for

H2491 - 0018

specialists in that kind of work.

Q The requirements would be stated in detail for the kind of work, not only whether mine worker, but a locomotive engineer in a mine, or something like that, would they?

A Naturally, since there are many kinds of professions. I, for instance, put in charge of the mining President Dr. Gaertner who was always oriented about the different jobs which were required in that field of work.

Q Then after you got the detailed specification of the qualifications of the workers desired, would you also get a statement as to what places they would work in, and so on?

A This was just the particular thing about it, especially from Speer, factories were always mentioned and they were also mentioned by priority; for instance, the ones that always were working at the so-called Fuehrer orders had priority over the others. Speer actually controlled the small places, not step by step, but directly from the highest echelon.

Q So that you would be informed at the Central Planning at least for Speer's factories the specialists and the place to which they were supposed to be sent, is that right?

A In the Central Planning only the numbers were determined for a certain time, three months or so. These orders were given to the individual offices who were working for me from all kinds

H2491 - 0019

of industries; the Central Planning was only met for about two weeks or so.

Q The Central Planning would decide that Speer would get so many hundred thousand and Milch would get so many hundred thousand, and that the agricultural program would get so many hundred thousand. Then, after that was agreed upon, if they all agreed upon it among themselves in the Central Planning Commission, and had no disputes on the number, and if there were disputes then the Fuehrer would decide?

A Yes.

Q Then, after they decided a hundred thousand for Speer, then the section chiefs in the rings for tanks, treads, and machine guns, etc., would meet with your section later and say we need so many hundred thousand, we need 10,000 who are welders and 10,000 who are metal workers, etc., is that right?

A Yes. There was a daily cooperation among the different offices where it was decided how many workers were needed for the individual industries. It was not like that when a factory asked for a certain amount of men, it was like that Speer said this factory got to be supplied with so and so many workers. In peace-time it was different.

Q And the requirements of Speer were met as a matter of priority among all the other industries; first Speer and

A 089218

H2491 - 0020

230

then the others?

A Yes.

Q We will stop for now.

APPROVED: J. Minny Jr.
Interrogator

J. Sandrum
Court Reporter

Gunter Kosse
Interpreter.

H2491 – 0021

3721-RS

H-2491

EXHIBIT U.S.A. 230 (3721-PS)

Filed Dec. 13, 1945
IMT Nuremberg
Germany

EXHIBIT U.S.A.

230

(3721-PS)

A 089201

H2491 – 0022

H2491-0023

17 pages